

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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73

ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /022 W

----- 002497

R 270755Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5129

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0476

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (PERCY, CHARLES H.)

SUBJ: VISIT OF SENATOR PERCY WITH PM VORSTER

REF: JOHANNESBURG 573 AND 574

1. IN THE TWO REFERENCE MESSAGES, SEN. PERCY HAS SUMMARIZED THE HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS HALF HOUR MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO FILL IN SOME OF THE ATMOSPHERICS.

2. THE APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, ALTHOUGH REQUESTED BY AMBASSADOR PIK BOTHA AND INCLUDED ON A TENTATIVE BASIS IN THE PROGRAM PREPARED BY DFA, WAS NOT CONFIRMED UNTIL CODEL MET WITH DFA SECRETARY BRAND FOURIE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE SEEING THE PRIME MINISTER. THE REASONS FOR THIS RATHER UNUSUAL TREATMENT ARE NOT CLEAR BUT ONE IS LED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE PM, UNSURE OF CODEL'S VIEWS, WANTED TO KEEP HIS OPTIONS OPEN UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE. PRESS STORIES FROM DA ES SALAAM MISQUOTING CODEL ON SALES OF ARMS BY ISRAEL TO SOUTH AFRICA AS WELL AS THE PROMINENCE GIVEN BY THE LOCAL ENGLISH PRESS TO CODEL'S OPPOSITION TO SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICIES MAY HAVE RAISED QUESTIONS IN VORSTER'S MIND WHETHER HE SHOULD RECEIVE THE SENATOR. THE FACT THAT THE PM HAD A SHEAF OF NEWSCLIPPINGS COVERING CODEL'S TRIP TO AFRICA TO WHICH HE REFERRED IN MAKING SOME COMMENTS TO THE SENATOR AT THE OUTSET OF THE CONVERSATION GIVES WEIGHT TO THIS INTERPRETATION.

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EM FROM THE MINUTE CODEL WALKED INTO VORSTER' OFFICE I SENSED AT ATMOSPHERE OF TENSION NOT PRESENT IN PREVIOUS MEETINGS. IN THE INITIAL GREETING, THE CUSTOMARY SMILE AND CORDIALITY HAD BEEN REPLACED BY A DOUR FORMALITY. FROM THEN ON VORSTER'S MANNER RANGED FROM "BLUNT TO ANTAGONISTIC" AS APTLY DESCRIBED BY CODEL IN HIS REPORT. HE SHOWED LITTLE INCLINATION TO DISCUSS ISSUES OR EVEN TO EXPLAIN HIS POINT OF VIEW. WITH BITTERNESS IN HIS VOICE, HE TOLD CODEL THAT HE KNEW THAT SOUTH AFRICA STANDS ALONE, ADDING THAT IF COMMUNIST FORCES WERE TO INVADE THE CAPE PENINSULA TOMORROW, THE WEST (READ THE US) WOULD NOT RAISE A FINGER. HE THEN WENT ON TO LAY ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR USG LACK OF UNDERSTANDING TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA ON THE DOORSTEP OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I HAVE HEARD HIM MAKE THIS CHARGE. IT REFLECTS AN ACCUMULATIVE BITTERNESS SHARPLY AGGRAVATED BY OUR FAILURE TO BLOCK UNSC RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN "AGGRESSION" IN ANGOLA WHICH SOURCES CLOSE TO THE PM TELL ME HE PARTICULARLY RESENTED. FAILURE OF THE SECRETARY TO INCLUDE SOUTH AFRICA IN HIS AFRICAN TRIP HAS ADDED TO THE RESENTMENT.

5. THE MOOD DISPLAYED BY THE PM DURING THE MEETING CAN BE DESCRIBED AS ONE OF ALMOST TRUCULENT DETERMINATION TO CARRY ON, ALONE IF NECESSARY, ALONG THE PATH OF PRESENT NATIONALIST POLICY. HE SHOWED NO FLEXIBILITY AND AN UTTER DISREGARD, IF NOT CONTEMPT, FOR WORLD OPINION. A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THIS ATTITUDE WAS PROBABLY FOR EFFECT IN THE MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT SUCH A MESSAGE CARRIED BACK TO CONGRESS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO WHICH THE SAG LOOKS FOR SUPPORT TO COUNTER WHAT IT REGARDS AS THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S HOSTILITY WOULD BE BENEFICIAL. THE PM IS TOO AWARE OF HIS DEPENDENCY ON THE US TO TAKE A WIDER SWIPE AT THE USG. IN THIS SENSE THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS A SAFER WHIPPING BOY.

6. SENATOR PERCY EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SEEING THIS ASSESSMENT. REQUEST HE BE SHOWN THE MESSAGE WITH THE REQUEST THAT HE MAINTAIN ITS CONFIDENTIALITY.  
BOWDLER

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Authority:** buchant0  
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**To:** STATE  
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